

111-1125

GENERAL POLICE ORDER

No. G.P.O. 05-004

Date: 11-02-2005

SUBJECT: Taser X26 Handling and Deployment

- I. **PURPOSE:** This order sets forth the Middleburg Heights Police Department policy regarding the training, handling, and deployment of the X26 Taser.

A. Specific objectives of this order are:

1. To inform and direct those officers who are authorized operators of the X26 Taser, in a uniform and professional manner, the proper tactics and procedures in deploying the X26 Taser.
2. To provide written guidelines for officers to follow when deploying the X26 Taser, as well as the documentation required for an X26 Taser deployment.

II. INFORMATION

The carrying of the X26 Taser shall be mandatory for all uniformed police personnel assigned to the patrol division. The X26 Taser is an additional police tool and **IS NOT INTENDED** to replace verbal problem solving skills, self-defense techniques, or firearms. The X26 Taser shall be deployed in circumstances where it is deemed reasonably necessary to control a dangerous or violent subject. The X26 Taser shall be deployed when deadly force does not appear to be justified and/or necessary, and attempts to subdue the subject by other conventional tactics have been, or will likely be, ineffective in the situation at hand; or there is a reasonable expectation that it will be unsafe for officers to approach within physical contact range of the subject. The X26 Taser **SHALL NOT** be deployed on subjects that are passively resisting.

III. DEFINITIONS



- A. **Deployment:** The activation of an X26 Taser resulting in the arcing of the unit, a contact maneuver (Drive Stun) on a subject or animal, and/or the discharge of an air cartridge whether or not the probes strike their intended target. The mere display of an X26 Taser is not considered a deployment.
- B. **“Tased”:** The word indicating that a person or animal has received an electrical charge from an X26 Taser.
- C. **Taser Control Manager:** AN X26 Taser instructor who has been appointed by the Chief of Police to manage the Department’s X26 Taser program.
- D. **Taser Instructors:** All approved X26 Taser instructors of the Middleburg Heights Police Department.
- E. **Medical Personnel:** Includes, but is not limited to, Doctors, Physician’s Assistants, Nurses, Paramedics, and Emergency Medical Technicians.
- F. **Taser:** The X26 Taser developed by Taser International.
- G. **Less Lethal Device:** Any device, when in the manner it is used or intended to be used is not likely to result in death or serious bodily injury.

IV. PROCEDURE

- A. X26 Tasers shall be issued to and handled or deployed only by officers who have completed the Middleburg Heights Police Department Taser training program or a training program conducted by Taser International. The X26 Taser shall be handled in the same manner and treated with the same degree of care and discretion as a firearm.
- B. X26 Tasers shall only be used in accordance with training instructions so as to follow Departmental policy and State Law. The deployment of the X26 Taser is considered a use of force one level greater than physical strength and skill and is on the same use of force level as pepper spray (Oleoresin Capsicum).
- C. Only properly functioning X26 Tasers shall be issued for field use. Officers will be issued an X26 Taser at the beginning of each shift by the Officer in Charge. The X26 Taser issued shall correspond with the vehicle driven by the officer on that shift and shall be documented on each individual officer’s duty

sheet. The battery charge shall be checked daily on all X26 Tasers at the beginning of first shift (0700-1500 Hours) by the Officer in Charge. The officer conducting the test shall remove the air cartridge from the X26 Taser. The officer will then point the X26 Taser in a safe direction, without an air cartridge affixed and conduct a one second "spark test" to ensure proper function of the unit. Individual officers will additionally check the X26 Taser at the beginning of each shift by conducting a one second "spark test" upon receiving the X26 Taser from the acting shift supervisor. Officers will then return each X26 Taser at the end of their shift.

- D. Any X26 Taser or component thereof found to be defective or damaged shall be brought to the attention of the Officer in Charge. The Officer in Charge shall then issue a temporary replacement. The defective/damaged item shall then be forwarded to the Taser Control Manager for repair and/or replacement.
- E. All X26 Tasers and associated equipment shall be properly secured when not in use. When carried in the field, the X26 Taser shall ONLY be carried in the Department approved holster. The holster shall be carried opposite the officer's Department issued sidearm on the duty belt.
- F. Each deployment of an X26 Taser shall be investigated and documented utilizing a Middleburg Heights X26 Taser Use Report form to accompany any other prepared report resulting from an X26 Taser deployment. This includes a contact deployment (Drive Stun), as well as the firing of an air cartridge or other deployment resulting in a subject or animal receiving an electrical charge from an X26 Taser, or when the X26 Taser is activated ("sparked") and the subject is controlled/subdued without actually receiving an electrical charge from the X26 Taser. Accidental discharge of an X26 Taser will be documented on a Departmental Form 1 directed to the Officer in Charge of the shift on which the accidental discharge occurs.

V. DEPLOYMENT

- A. Whenever an X26 Taser is being deployed it is the responsibility of the deploying officer to make certain that other officers on the scene understand that the X26 Taser is about to be deployed and **NOT** lethal force prior to deployment if at all possible. The deploying officer should give the warning if possible "TASER...TASER...TASER" to alert other officers as well as give the subject an additional opportunity to cease his/her conduct if the situation allows.
- B. When an officer approaches a subject with the intent to deploy the X26 TASER, an additional officer should also approach whenever possible to provide lethal cover should it become necessary for the protection of life. Verbal commands should be used constantly before (whenever practical), during, and after the deployment of the X26 Taser to warn the subject to cease his/her aggressive demeanor or action.
- C. Subjects who have received an electrical charge from an X26 TASER, via probes or drive stun, shall be treated as follows:
 - 1. Once the subject is in custody and secured, the arresting officer shall notify EMS that the subject has received an electrical charge from the X26 Taser and relate the approximate time the action occurred. If the probes penetrate the skin, the puncture sites shall be brought to the attention of medical personnel.
 - 2. Only medical personnel may remove or direct to be removed, any probes that are embedded in soft tissue areas such as the neck, face and groin. Removal from other areas will be at the discretion of the on-scene supervisor or medical personnel. If in doubt as to the removing of probes embedded in a subject, the probes should be left in place for removal by medical personnel so as to err on the side of caution.
 - 3. The on-scene supervisor shall allow medical personnel to determine if the subject should be transported to the hospital for additional treatment.

4. If the probes are no longer affixed to the subject, and medical personnel determine the subject does not need to be transported to the emergency room/hospital, the subject may be transported to jail.
5. If the subject is transported to the emergency room/hospital, the transporting officer will obtain a medical documentation from medical personnel before the subject is transported to the jail facility.
6. Expended cartridges and probes that strike a subject are to be considered biohazard material and are to be treated as such. Probes will be given the same care as hypodermic needles and will be discarded in a similar fashion.

VI. X26 TASER DEPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- A. The X26 Taser should **NOT** be used on subjects who have come into contact with flammables or in environments where flammables are obviously present such as Methamphetamine Laboratories. If assisting another agency consideration must be given to the pepper spray used by that agency as some OC sprays are alcohol based and could ignite. The pepper spray issued by Middleburg Heights is non-flammable.
- B. The area or terrain where the X26 Taser is to be deployed must be considered as the subject falling could lead to an injury (stairs, hilly terrain, trees, etc.).
- C. If possible, the X26 Taser should not be used on pregnant women or children. The use of the X26 Taser shall however, be deemed acceptable when deployed on subjects that are children or pregnant women in situations where the decision not to deploy the X26 Taser would expose police officers, other persons, or the subject to unnecessary risk of harm or death.

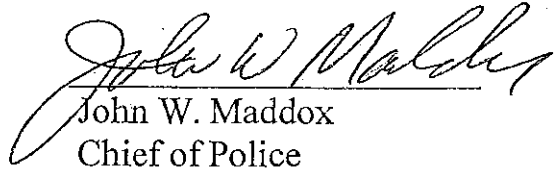
VII. DOCUMENTATION

- A. The deploying officer is responsible for documenting the deployment of the X26 Taser by completing the appropriate incident report as well as a Middleburg Heights X26 Taser Use Report that is to be attached to the incident report. The incident report shall detail the probable cause for the deployment of the X26 Taser. If the deploying officer is not the primary officer, then the appropriate supplement report will be completed by the deploying officer documenting his/her role in the deployment. Although not considered a deployment, if an X26 Taser is displayed to a subject in order to gain compliance this should be documented in the appropriate corresponding report.
- B. The deploying officer shall ensure photographs are taken of the subject receiving the electrical charge from the X26 Taser (drive stun or probes) with special attention to any area injured and where the charge was received. The photographs are to be submitted as evidence following the same procedure that is already in place for digital imaging.
- C. The X26 Taser that was deployed shall be removed from service until such time as the deployment report is downloaded from the X26 Taser's data port. The Taser Control Manager shall perform this function. Once a printed report is obtained, the X26 Taser may be returned to service. The deploying officer will receive a replacement X26 Taser until such time the X26 Taser used in the incident can be returned to service.
- D. A copy of the printed deployment report shall include the date prior to the deployment, the date of deployment on the subject, and the day after if available, and then be included with the original report.

VIII. TASER CONTROL MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Taser Control Manager Shall:

1. Receive, inspect, and ensure the maintenance and replacement of the Department's X26 Tasers and related equipment.
2. Establish and maintain systems to record issuance of equipment.
3. Return defective or damaged X26 Tasers and air cartridges to suppliers.
4. Obtain service and/or replacement for defective or damaged X26 Taser components from the supplier.
5. Ensure basic certification and re-certification training is provided as needed, as well as maintaining a record of the training.
6. All other duties as may become necessary for the employment, maintenance, and enhancement of the Department's X26 Taser Program.
7. Maintain computerized records of all X26 Taser deployments utilizing the USB Dataport Download Kit as well as.


John W. Maddox
Chief of Police